

## Parisian Affairs.

THE AUTUMN SHAM BATTLES—IT IS MAGNIFICENT, BUT IT IS NOT WAR—  
SYMBOLIC CARTOONS—SEDAN VS. JENA—TURKEY PLAYING WITH  
FIRE—THE ORIGIN OF THE 1870 WAR—FRANCE AGAIN EXCITED—  
ENGLAND ADVISED TO BE DECIDED AND RESOLUTE, SHE MUST  
LOOK AFTER HER RIGHTS—THE SEWERAGE SYSTEM OF PARIS—  
SEINE RIVER RICH IN MICROBES—ANOTHER COMMERCIAL MISSION  
TO CHINA—FORMOSA DESTINED TO BE A SPLENDID POSSESSION—  
M. MAURICE BARRÉS—THE FOREMOST OF YOUNG FRENCH LITER-  
ATEURS.

"IT is magnificent, but it is not war"; that is the verdict of the grave military judges upon these autumn manœuvres battles, where all is theatrical and conventional: the rôles of the victors and the vanquished marked out weeks before hand, and seem to produce no other effect than to cause rival commanders to become personal enemies. But there is nothing representing modern war in all the "turning movements," and cutting off retreats, because since 25 years the tactics of war have been changed by new engines and appliances that have yet to be tested. The autumn exercises are a duel between two generals who are limited to do certain things. Unhappily in real war the case is otherwise; the element of the unknown there enters, and the adversaries are ignorant of one another's plans. It is the triumph of the artificial—it is instruction not warfare. The manœuvres cost a great deal of money to States, and allow foreign delegates to see a little behind the scenes of each country's defensive forces. General Dragomirov, who has been delegated by the Russian War Office to follow the French manœuvres, has just stated to a serious journalist that his little cossacks, on their cobs, would make short work of the German and English cavalry! The general must be joking; the journalist swallowed the opinion as gospel.

There is a good deal of 1870-71 war diplomatic literature now appearing, and many symbolic cartoons and sketches, to remind Germany that against Sedan the French can place Jena. No doubt events are levelling up for the coming real war as they must do. Turkey is viewed as playing with fire, in trying to set the Armenian allies at loggerheads. Comte de Benedetti has just published in his "Ems Mission" the full secret of the origin of the 1870 war. On the famous 13th July, 1870, all was diplomatically amicable between the two governments, or rather the two sovereigns; by evening the two nations were virtually at war. The King of Prussia never insulted Comte Benedetti, and approved of the Hohenzollern Prince renouncing candidature for the Russian Crown. The French Foreign Secretary, the Duc de Grammont, had been acting over the head of the French Ambassador, Benedetti, and took up an insulting attitude towards the King of Prussia. The latter concluded Benedetti was kept informed of what was taking place at the French Foreign Office, sent his aide-de-camp to the Comte, saying that while His Majesty reaffirmed privately to Benedetti, as the matter had now been made public, and misrepresented by De Grammont, the King left the subject also in the hands of his ministers. Though neither the French nor German peoples desired war, both not the less well knew such was inevitable. Theoretically, it was to be a struggle for first place in Europe—and still disputed. But there was a party in France, headed by the Duc de Grammont, the Empress Eugénie and a few other high personages, who desired war, in order to seat the Prince Imperial firmly on the throne, as all saw his father's days were numbered. In Germany, Bismarck, Moltke and Roon desired to complete the unity of Germany, and were well aware that the French army were far inferior in discipline and efficiency to that of Germany. All that was necessary was to light the match. The Duc de Grammont forged his despatch that Benedetti had been insulted at Ems by the King, and Bismarck forged his despatch that the Prussian Ambassador had been insulted in Paris. These two lies, circulated in the course of the day of 13th July, 1870, led a few hours later to the formal declaration of war by France. The French could then truly say they had not been consulted about the war, and had no voice in it. That secured them much pity, and won them a great deal of sympathy. Now they have the Republic, and control their own destinies, and the world's opinion will exact from them an account of their stewardship in a different vein should they commit now any imprudence. The

personal governments of Napoleon and William, in 1870 could not prevent war. Will the Republic be able to resist being dragged into war? It is surrounded by flatterers, who abuse the credulity of the masses, and who, boasting to work in their interest, only labour to advance their own. The truth can be kept back from them, as was the case by the Duc de Grammont; overheated patriotism may commit an act that will produce a diplomatic incident; the Chamber may indulge in language that would cause irreparable mischief, and shots may be exchanged on the frontier, before the nation has time to weigh, coolly and circumspectly, the terrible issue of war. Hence the necessity of the greatest prudence on the part of the Republic.

The Lord Mayor of London has returned home, and he will be difficult to please, if he be not delighted with the welcome he received in France. Of the project to secure the presence of M. Faure in England, that is not alluded to, and in conversation is not mentioned. It is likely love's labour lost. That is to be regretted deeply, and shows that the cordial relations—so much to be desired, are only veneer deep. England must at the present be very firm, very decided, and very resolute, in her diplomacy with France, while practicing all the courtesies and the best of good dispositions; but she must never abandon one iota of her rights; then France and she will get on together. Business is business, and friendship is friendship. It is not too late for "Sir Renals" to examine his bank book, and see if he cannot "remember the poor of Paris." A cheque for only £40 to the indigent of Bordeaux was, to say the least, economical, even in these hard times, for London's chief magistrate, and the journals record nothing in the way of donation to the capital's poorbox. The municipal taxes stood him a Lucullus déjeuner. The Audit Office has nothing to do with the corporation accounts, but the city council has an emergency fund to meet contingencies. "Mi lord maire" ought to have given £100 to Bordeaux, and the latter's cheque to the poor of Paris.

The Paris section of the Seine is infectious, but odd, it does not infect. It is a *cloaca maxima*, from the moment it quits the city, for there the moiety of half of the capital's sewers empty themselves; the other moiety run still into the river—and the latter we have been drinking for ten days; it becomes richer in microbes as the drought continues. The boasted sewerage system of Paris has two draw backs: the water closet matters in winter do not move on because king frost holds them back; in summer they cannot advance because there is no water to flush. However, once the stuff quits the city at Clichy, the Seine down to Honfleur is simply an open sewer, with sides and bottom lined with black, stagnant mud. Does the visitor wish to have a good look at one of the sights in the suburbs of Paris; let him go to Mady, the Baden of France; let him view the historical "machine" which pumps up water from the Seine; at that spot the Seine is black, and bubbling with gas. It stinks offensively. Now that water supplies half of Versailles and the palace fountains. Strange, Versailles notwithstanding has the reputation of being the healthiest city in France; it is the refuge sought when epidemics rage; it has never known cholera. True, the streets are very wide and the boulevards wider, so large channels of fresh air are constantly doing flushing work. But this filth does some good; it is to its accumulation at the mouth of the Seine that the Paris fish market is supplied with its splendid soles and turbot.

Paris has four secondary lyceums for girls and each is called after a celebrated "man"—Racine, Victor-Hugo, etc. It is time to remember celebrated ladies, Mesdames de Sévigné and Maintenon for example.

France is sending out another commercial mission to China to explore the hinterlands of the open ports. The Japs have preceded them, and being the early birds, will secure the early worm. I asked a Japanese friend, who has returned from the war, what about Formosa. He replied it was destined to be a splendid possession; it will be farmed out to militia colonists, who will at the same time push back the rather wildish natives. There is no hurry. The Japs are occupied with three things: to create a fleet, secure permanent political and naval relations with England, and push her trade everywhere. The belief in the resuscitation of China is accepted as impossible so long as the Mandarins dominate; the latter can only be extinguished by opening up the empire.